



City of Austin

City Manager

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Preliminary search considerations and strategy

What we need to learn about the City of Austin

While we have familiarized ourselves with the City of Austin, we are eager to learn more about the ambitions for the City and its next City Manager. Developing a more detailed understanding of your City will enable our team to evaluate internal and external candidates effectively, and to represent the City of Austin successfully throughout the search process. Through an in-depth needs assessment with key stakeholders, we will want to learn more about the following points.

Sample Target Questions Include:

- What is the City Council's vision for the City of Austin? What is the communities vision for the City of Austin?
- How does this translate to the goals and milestones that the future City Manager will be tasked with achieving? Are there specific outcomes—both in the short- and long-term—that the City Council has discussed as crucial to the success of the Austin?
- What are the top three opportunities and challenges facing the City of Austin over the next five years? How do they impact the desired profile of the next City Manager?
- How would you describe success for the new City Manager after her/his first 12 months and after s/he has been in the position for five years?
- What are the top competencies (skills, experiences, personality characteristics) you would like to see in the next City Manager?
- How would you describe the City of Austin culture? What components of the culture do you want to be sure to retain as you move forward? In what ways would you like to continue developing or changing the culture? What are the key areas of concern?
- What is the City Council's (or communities) analysis of the current team, its leaders, and their strengths and areas of concern?
- Outreach to stakeholders at the beginning of the search is essential. We should discuss the pros and cons of community groups as part of the selection process.

Rules of Engagement:

- Confidentiality
- Communication
- Candidate care

Potential relevant experience & competencies

FOR DISCUSSION

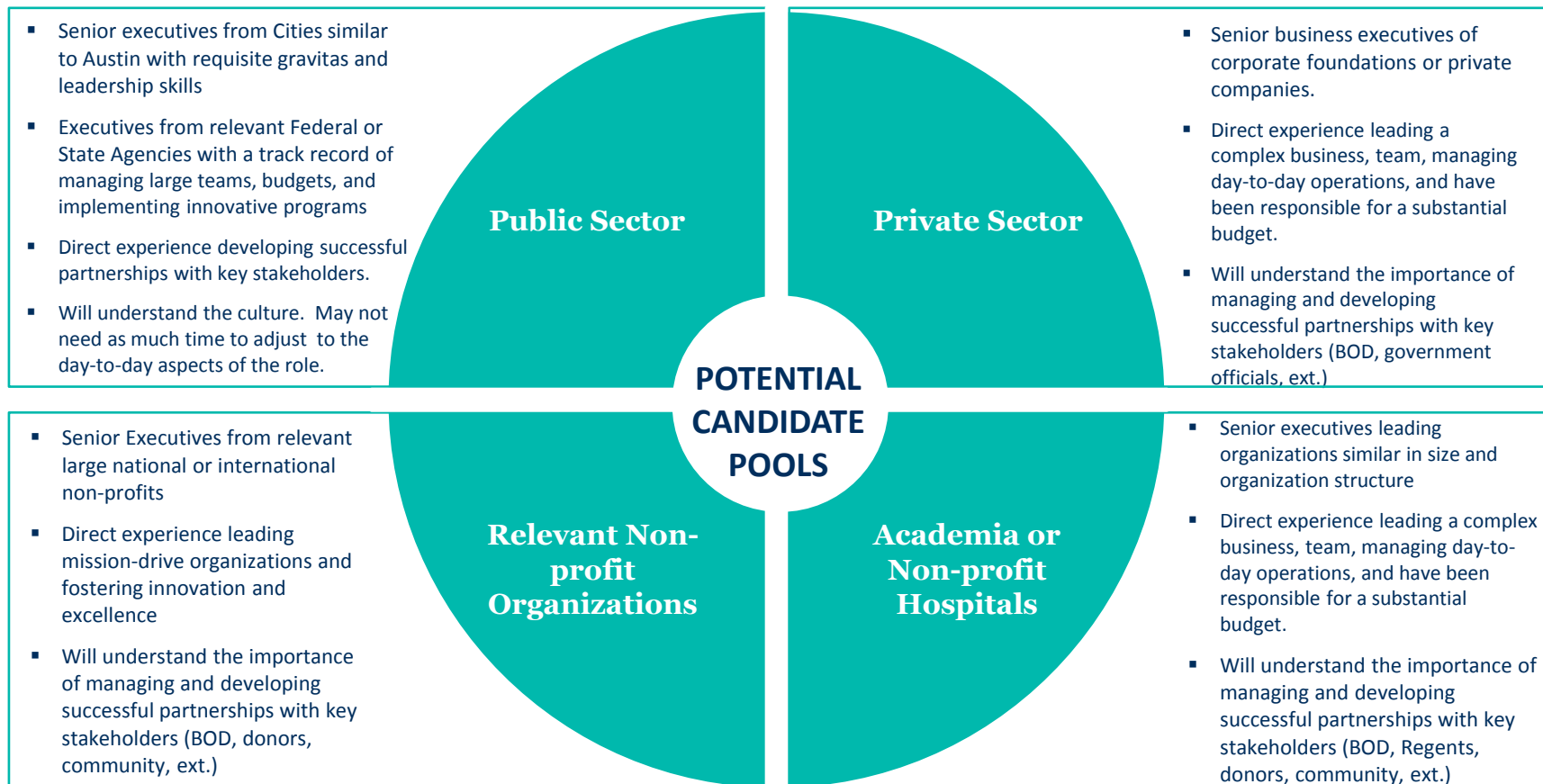
Based on our understanding of the situation, we believe that the successful candidate may possess experience in several of the competency areas listed below. Through our conversations, we would assign importance to each of these areas, and also identify other skills and competencies that will be critical for success.

Competencies	Low	Importance	High
Strategic and Visionary Leadership: proven experience conceptualizing, developing, and delivering key initiatives; capable of articulating a compelling vision for growth; an entrepreneurial, innovative and, ideally, cross-disciplinary thinker able to keep pace with a growing city; can provide complete and objective information regarding new/current policies, along with the pros, cons, and long-term impacts, both positive and negative	●	●	●
Outstanding relationship builder: a highly collaborative individual with exceptional listening skills who can capably lead a complex organization and fast paced city; navigate potential differences of opinion, and partner effectively with internal and external stakeholders	●	●	●
Ability to integrate smoothly and collaborate effectively: visionary and influential leader who has the passion to build relationships with and inspire different constituencies in a genuine, meaningful way	●	●	●
Operations and Business Acumen: a qualified leader able to allocate funds effectively and manage budgets; has vast organizational experience and the ability to manage/partner with City Council and additional key stakeholders effectively	●	●	●
Political and Intellectual Presence: an ambassador who can maintain and build upon strong support from the City's various community members, organizations, and supporters; develop a productive partnerships with local, state, and federal stakeholders, as well as leaders within the private sector; operate with gravitas in the public sphere	●	●	●
Management Experience: proven experience efficiently leading departments of similar scope and size; ability to motivate, inspire, and develop teams	●	●	●
Passion for the City of Austin: alignment with the City's mission, values, and goals; enthusiasm for its programs and growth strategy	●	●	●

Potential candidate pools

FOR DISCUSSION

There are four broad areas from which we may find qualified candidates and sources of ideas, each with their own trade-offs relative to this position:



All Potential Candidates must have a demonstrated track record of a commitment to diversity and a passion for civil service.

Preliminary Council-designated group structure and timeline considerations

City of Austin elements of engagement proposed structure

FOR DISCUSSION

The selection of the new City Manager may well be the most important decision the Mayor and City Council will make. Identifying the best City Manager for Austin should be a national search with community engagement. There should be a process that reaches deep into the community and broadly across the country.

City Council

Ultimate authority and decision making rests with the Council and will not be delegated.

The City Council makes the final decision on the following matters:

- Establishment and appointment of a Council-designated group
- The selection of the search firm
- The search timing and process
- The search criteria used by the search firm
- The pool of Finalists
- The new City Manager

Council-Designated Group

The Council-Designated Group shall be:

- Eleven members, comprised of one appointment by each council member, with the Mayor's appointment serving as chair and the Mayor Pro Tem's appointment serving as vice chair.
- To avoid conflicts of interest, no one can serve as a committee member if, in the past year, they've worked for the City, had a contract with the City, or were a registered lobbyist.
- Committee members must live within the city limits.

The Council-designated group shall (while at all times subject to the will of the City Council):

- Give recommendations to the City Council, after having facilitated and received public input on:
 - The search timing and process
 - The search criteria used by RRA
 - A pool of semi-finalists
- Engage with RRA in identifying best practices in city management (as it applies to city manager qualities and engagement with council);
- Conduct, together with RRA, interviews of people in the community about what they expect from a City Manager;
- Conduct, together with the RRA, public hearing(s) to seek input from the community at large as to what should be expected from a city manager

General Public

The general public shall have the opportunity to have input at all points, at all times, on all issues.

May provide input:

- At all points, at all times, on all issues through traditional direct contact with Council Members (subject to the confidentiality of information or materials required of Council Members)
- Public hearings and input on:
 - The search criteria used by the search firm
 - Selecting the new manager from among the finalists (to be discussed)

Council-designated group options

FOR DISCUSSION

There are two ways to structure the Council-designated group. Both options have their advantages and disadvantages which will impact the timeline of our search. By the end of this meeting, City Council needs to decide how to structure the Council-designated group.

Option ONE

11 Council-designated group members interview Candidates together and agree on finalist recommendations to submit to City Council

Option TWO

6 Council-designated group members interview Candidates together and agree on finalist recommendations to submit to City Council

Advantages

- All Council-designated group members interview everyone at the same time
- All Council-designated group members decide which Candidates to suggest City Council to nominated as Finalists

Disadvantages

- Council-designated group members may not have enough one-on-one time with Candidates
- Group may be overwhelming to Candidates during interviews
- May take longer to agree on a list of recommendations

Advantages

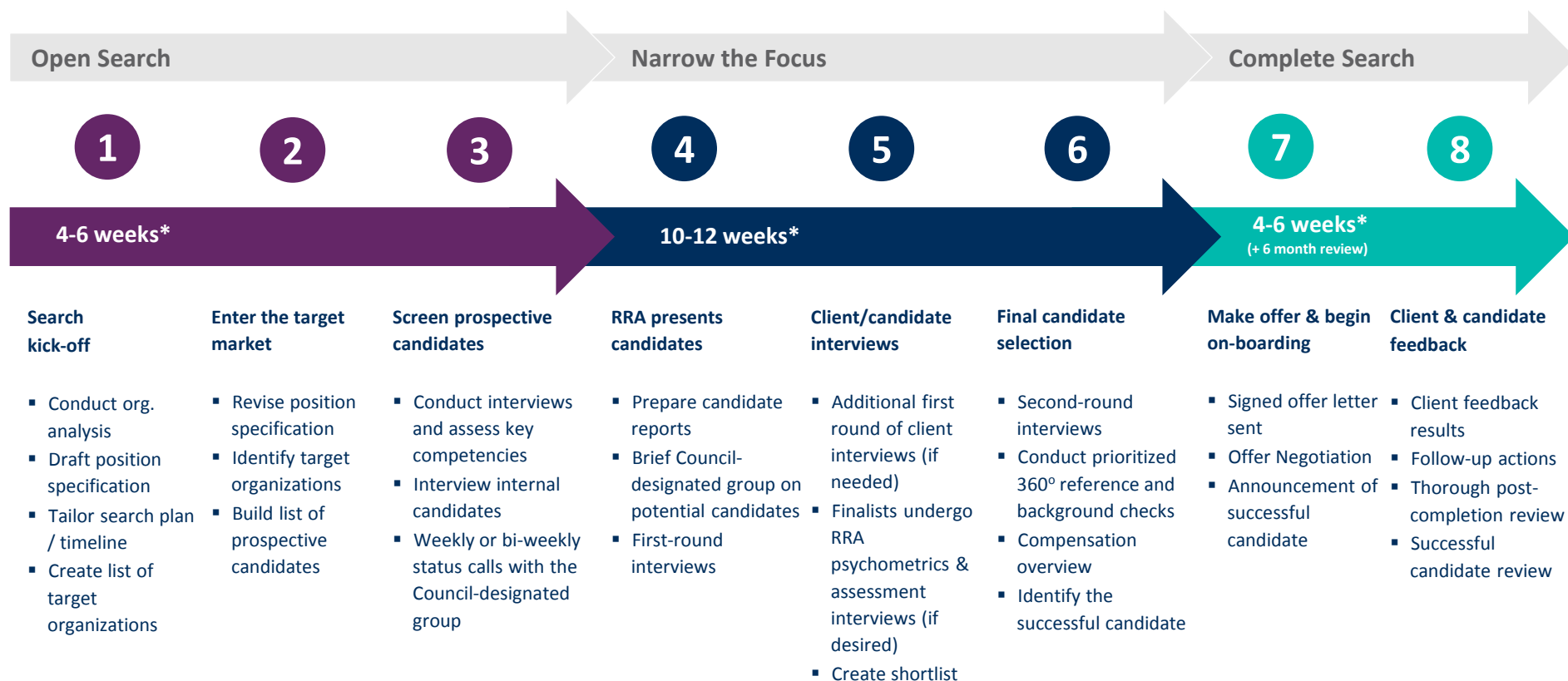
- Smaller group will allow for Council-designated group members to have more time to get to know the Candidates
- Allows for Council-designated group members to be more engaged in the process

Disadvantages

- Fewer members will be exposed to Candidates
- Will all voices be heard

Search methodology and timeline

With a proven and proprietary approach to finding exceptional city leaders, we adapt to your unique needs.



*All time periods are estimates only and actual times may vary.

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